

In the claims:

1. (currently amended) A device for compressing the chest of a patient during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wherein the chest is characterized by the sternum of the patient and areas lateral to the sternum, said device comprising:

a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient;

a driver mechanism, operably connected to the band, for contracting the band;

a fluid-filled cushion disposed between the chest of the patient and the band, with at least a portion of said cushion disposed over the sternum of the patient; and

an automatic controller for controlling operation of the driver mechanism;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to contract the band at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to contract the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

2. (currently amended) A device for compressing the chest of a patient during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wherein the chest is characterized by the sternum of the patient and areas lateral to the sternum, said device comprising:

a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient, the band having a plurality of fluid-receiving cells disposed along the length of the band;

a driver mechanism, operably connected to the band, for inflating the fluid-receiving cells;

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a cushion disposed between the chest of the patient and the band, with at least a portion of said cushion disposed over the sternum of the patient; and

an automatic controller for controlling operation of the driver mechanism;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid-receiving cells at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid-receiving cells to a pressure sufficient to contract the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

3. (original) The device of claim 2, wherein the cushion is a sealed cushion.

4. (original) The device of claim 2, wherein the band is comprised of an inelastic material.

5. (currently amended) The device of claim 2, wherein A device for compressing the chest of a patient during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, said device comprising:

a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient, the band having a plurality of fluid-receiving cells disposed along the length of the band, wherein the plurality of fluid-receiving cells are in fluid communication with each other;

a driver mechanism, connected to the band and the fluid receiving cells, for inflating the fluid receiving cells;

a cushion disposed between the chest of the patient and the band; and

~~an automatic controller for controlling the operation of the driver mechanism;~~

~~wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid-receiving cells at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;~~

~~wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid-receiving cells to a pressure sufficient to contract the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation.~~

6. (original) The device of claim 5, wherein the cushion is a sealed cushion.

7. (original) The device of claim 5, wherein the band is comprised of an inelastic material.

8. (currently amended) A device for compressing the chest of a patient during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wherein the chest is characterized by the sternum of the patient and areas lateral to the sternum, said device comprising:

a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient, the band having a plurality of fluid-receiving cells disposed along the length of the band, each fluid-receiving cell being interconnected to another fluid-receiving cell by a manifold;

a driver mechanism, operably connected to the band, for inflating the fluid-receiving cells;

a cushion disposed between the chest of the patient and the band, with at least a portion of said cushion disposed over the sternum of the patient; and

an automatic controller for controlling operation of the driver mechanism;

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wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid-receiving cells at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid-receiving cells to a pressure sufficient to contract the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

9. (original) The device of claim 8, wherein the cushion is a sealed cushion.

10. (original) The device of claim 8, wherein the band is comprised of an inelastic material.

11. (currently amended) The device of claim 8 wherein A device for compressing the chest of a patient during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, said device comprising:

~~a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient, the band having a plurality of fluid receiving cells disposed along the length of the band, each fluid receiving cell being interconnected to another fluid receiving cell by a manifold, wherein the plurality of fluid-receiving cells are in fluid communication with each other;~~

~~a driver mechanism, connected to the band and the fluid receiving cells, for inflating the fluid-receiving cells;~~

~~a cushion disposed between the chest of the patient and the band; and~~

~~an automatic controller for controlling the operation of the driver mechanism;~~

~~wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid-receiving cells at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;~~

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~~wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid receiving cells to a pressure sufficient to contract the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation.~~

12. (original) The device of claim 11, wherein the cushion is a sealed cushion.

13. (original) The device of claim 11, wherein the band is comprised of an inelastic material.

14. (currently amended) The device of claim 1 wherein the cushion is sized and dimensioned to cover substantially the entire anterior portion of the chest of the patient, including the sternum of the patient.

15. (currently amended) The device of claim 2 wherein the cushion is sized and dimensioned to cover substantially the entire anterior portion of the chest of the patient, including the sternum of the patient.

16. (currently amended) The device of claim 5 wherein the cushion is sized and dimensioned to cover substantially the entire anterior portion of the chest of the patient, including the sternum of the patient.

17. (currently amended) The device of claim 8 wherein the cushion is sized and dimensioned to cover substantially the entire anterior portion of the chest of the patient, including the sternum of the patient.

18. (currently amended) The device of claim 11 wherein the cushion is sized and dimensioned to cover substantially the entire anterior portion of the chest of the patient, including the sternum of the patient.

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19. (previously presented) A method of compressing the chest of a patient during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wherein the chest is characterized by the sternum of the patient and areas lateral to the sternum, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a device for compressing the chest of a patient, said device comprising:

a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient;

a driver mechanism, operably connected to the band, for contracting the band;

a fluid-filled cushion sized and dimensioned to cover substantially the entire anterior portion of the chest of the patient, including the sternum of the patient; and

an automatic controller for controlling operation of the driver mechanism;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to contract the band at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

wherein the controller is programmed to contract the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

placing the cushion on the anterior portion of the chest of the patient such that the cushion substantially covers the sternum of the patient;

securing the band around the chest of the patient and over the cushion; and

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contracting the band to compress the chest of the patient to a tightness and at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation on the patient.

20. (previously presented) A method of compressing the chest of a patient during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wherein the chest is characterized by the sternum of the patient and areas lateral to the sternum, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a device for compressing the chest of a patient, said device comprising:

a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient, the band having a plurality of fluid-receiving cells disposed along the length of the band;

a driver mechanism, operably connected to the band, for inflating the fluid-receiving cells;

a cushion sized and dimensioned to cover substantially the entire anterior portion of the chest of the patient, with at least a portion of said cushion disposed over the sternum of the patient; and

an automatic controller for controlling operation of the driver mechanism;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid-receiving cells at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid-receiving cells to a pressure sufficient to contract the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

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placing the cushion on the anterior portion of the chest of the patient such that the cushion substantially covers the sternum of the patient;

securing the band around the chest of the patient and over the cushion;

inflating the fluid-receiving cells to a pressure sufficient to contract the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation; and

inflating the cells at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

21. (previously presented) A method of compressing the chest of a patient, wherein the chest is characterized by the sternum of the patient and areas lateral to the sternum, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a device for compressing the chest of a patient, said device comprising:

a band adapted to extend around the chest of the patient, the band having a plurality of fluid-receiving cells disposed along the length of the band, wherein each of the fluid-receiving cells is in fluid communication with a manifold;

a driver mechanism, operably connected to the band, for inflating the fluid-receiving cells;

a cushion sized and dimensioned to cover substantially the entire anterior portion of the chest of the patient, including the sternum of the patient; and

an automatic controller for controlling operation of the driver mechanism;

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wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid-receiving cells at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

wherein the controller is programmed to control the driver mechanism to inflate the fluid-receiving cells to a pressure sufficient to contract the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation;

placing the cushion on the anterior portion of the chest of the patient such that the cushion substantially covers the sternum of the patient;

securing the band around the chest of the patient and over the cushion;

inflating the fluid-receiving cells to a pressure sufficient to contract the band to a tightness sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation on the patient; and

inflating the cells at a rate sufficient to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation.